



VA Heartland Network

Truman VA BULLETIN

JULY 27, 2007

WELCOME -----

Gary Lavender, Painter (FM)
Elbert Pollion, Cook (BUS)
Barbara Sanchez, Medical Records Technician (BUS)
Charliss Taylor, Medical Supply Technician (PS)
Lisa Thomas, MD, Staff Psychiatrist (BH)
Jami Thompson, Student Nurse Technician (PS)

FAREWELL -----

Beverly Atkins, LPN (PS)
Kimberly Lillywhite, Nursing Assistant (PS)
Chamille March, RN (PS)
Sanjiv Sethi, MD, Staff Psychiatrist (BH)
Donald Shores, Biomedical Engineering Technician (FM)
Sophia Yahya, MD, Staff Psychiatrist (BH)

NEW ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR NAMED

Marc A. Magill has been appointed Associate Director at Truman VA effective Aug. 5. Currently a Health Systems Specialist in the VA Southeast Network (VISN 7), he has been serving as the Acting Deputy Network Director. Magill's VA career began in 1985 and he has completed VA training programs as a Hospital Administrative Resident, as a Health Systems Specialist and as a Chief, Information Resource Management (IRM). In addition, he is a graduate of the VHA Executive Career Field (ECF) program. Prior to his appointment in the VISN 7 office in Duluth, Ga., Magill served as the (1) VA/DoD Facility Planner at the New Mexico Regional Federal Medical Center in Albuquerque, N.M.; (2) the Special Assistant to the Director at the VAMC Beckley, W. Va.; and (3) the Chief, IRM Service at the VA Illiana Health Care System in Danville, Ill. While in Danville, he also served as Acting Chief, Medical Administration Service and Acting Associate Director. Magill earned a bachelor's degree in business administration from Millikin University, Decatur, Ill. in 1983 and a master's degree in health care administration from Trinity University, San Antonio, Tex. in 1985. He and his wife have two daughters.



TRUMAN TEAM POSTER WINS AWARD

A poster describing the results of Truman VA's Discharge Appointment Team efforts to improve inpatient discharge flow and throughput won second place at the Midwest ACA FIX Regional Collaborative conference held June 19-21 in Minneapolis. Approximately 25 facilities exhibited posters. The winning poster is on display in the Quality Improvement display case on the first floor near the Canteen Food Court.

The purpose of the Midwest ACA FIX Regional Collaborative is to improve inpatient flow and throughput while improving quality. Each participating facility is responsible for completing three 100-day projects. Truman VA's first project aimed to smooth discharges across the day by aligning all activities needed to discharge patients successfully at a scheduled time. The team implemented discharge appointments for all patients. Team facilitators are **Teresa Jacobs** (CS) and **Larry Propp** (Research). Team members include: **Peggy Wilburn** (PS), **Veronica Ramnarine, LCSW** (PS), **Kathy Karl, LCSW** (PS), **Lana Zerrer, MD** (PC), **Will Roland, MD** (COS), **Mohan Rao, MD** (PC), **Julie Stansfield, MD** (PC), **Beth Sjoblom, MD** (PC), **Nicole Fearing, MD** (SC), **Mandeep Singh, MD** (SC), **Doak Phillips, MD** (PC), **Aaron Zuidema, MD** (PC), **Tina Armstrong, RN** (PS), **Kim Holthaus, RN** (PS), **Maya Warren, RN** (PS), **Paula Williams, RN** (PS), **Maureen Anderson, RN** (PS), **Bill Dickinson, RPh** (Pharmacy) and **Donna Krause** (IM). The winning poster was illustrated by **Wayne Meyer** (Medical Media). Congratulations to all!

VA SECRETARY RESIGNS

Jim Nicholson, Secretary of Veterans Affairs since 2005, recently tendered his resignation effective no later than Oct. 1. In his letter of resignation to President Bush, he wrote that it had been an honor and privilege to lead the VA during this historic time for our men and women who have worn the uniform. In addition, he said that he wants to return to the private sector "to get back into business, while I still can." Nicholson left the private business world more than 10 years ago, where he ran a successful development and construction company. He was elected chair of the Republican National Committee in January 1997. Before becoming the VA Secretary, he served as the U.S. Ambassador to the Vatican from 2001 to 2004.

NATIONAL MRSA PROGRAM TO EXPAND

The VA's national MRSA (Methicillin-Resistant Staphylococcus Aureus) Surveillance/Screening Initiative that was initiated March 15 in Truman VA's Intensive Care Unit (ICU) will expand to all acute care units by Sept. 30. The initiative includes (1) active surveillance/screening – nasal swabs of all patients to see if they are carriers of MRSA germs; (2) contact precautions – placing positive MRSA patients on contact isolation; (3) hand hygiene – improving compliance with Centers for Disease Control (CDC) guidelines; and (4) culture change – active staff involvement in prevention of infection and implementation of necessary changes. Kathy Kormann, local MRSA Initiative Coordinator, will provide a series of 30-minute educational programs on Wednesday, Aug. 15 in the auditorium. Sessions will begin at 6:00 a.m., 8:30 a.m., 11:00 a.m., 12:30 p.m., 2:00 p.m. and 5:00 p.m. All staff members are encouraged to attend. The sessions will include more information in implementation of the MRSA Initiative, outcomes for the ICU to date and to obtain staff input on ways to improve infection control practices in the facility.

FOREIGN LANGUAGE INTERPRETERS

Truman VA maintains a list of employees that are proficient in another language including American Sign Language. This list is updated annually and is used to provide the best customer service to veterans and employees. If you are proficient in another language and are willing to serve as an interpreter, contact Lyn Patterson, EEO Program Manager, at extension 56316 or via e-mail at lynda.patterson@va.gov.



RECENT EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION AWARDS

Star Award (May) - **Diana Langdon** (PS)
 Star Award (June) - **Oscar Kemp** (FM)
 Employee of the Month (July) - **Sara Taylor, RN** (PS)
 Torch Award - **Paul Jones, DO** (CS)

CHAPLAIN PROGRAM NEEDS ASSESSMENT

VA's National Chaplain Center requires that each medical center chaplain program perform an annual needs assessment. Alan Helland, Coordinating Chaplain at Truman VA, would appreciate feedback from you about what you think VA chaplains should be doing at this facility. Provide your feedback to Chaplain Helland via e-mail or at extension 52202.

MU CAMPUS CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS

The University of Missouri-Columbia (MU) has begun work on the infrastructure to support MU Health Care and campus building projects including underground sewer, water and other utility pipelines. The work included demolition of the University Terrace apartments to prepare the area for an expanded utility substation, surface parking and the planned Orthopaedic Institute. This activity, which began earlier in July, is the first phase of MU Health Care's master facility plan that will include renovating Children's Hospital, building a new surgery tower at University Hospital and expanding other hospital facilities. Please be cautious near the construction sites and be aware that traffic patterns in the area will be periodically disrupted and/or altered. To learn about current MU construction projects, visit the following Web site: www.muhealth.org/construction/index.shtml.

VHA HIRING 100 TRANSITION PATIENT ADVOCATES

Veterans that have served in the war in Iraq and Afghanistan frequently face a number of unfamiliar issues in making the sudden transition to civilian life. Shortly after serving in a combat zone, they rejoin families and try to determine how to make a living or where to go to get medical treatment and benefits they need and have earned. To help make such adjustments easier, VHA has hired and is training 100 Transition Patient Advocates nationwide to provide individually tailored assistance to veterans. Each advocate is part of a new Transition of Care and Case Management team, based at the VA medical center closest to the veteran's home or best able to provide the services they require. The patient advocates will meet with veterans, family members and may even travel wherever the veteran needs to go. They will help veterans with every conceivable problem, from filling out paperwork to obtaining an appointment to receive specialized clinical treatment. All severely wounded Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom (OEF/OIF) veterans will be assigned a case management team. All other returning OEF/OIF veterans will be screened to determine if they need case management and any veteran, who desires a case management team, will get one. About 80 percent of the Transition Patient Advocates are veterans and nearly a quarter of them are veterans from Iraq or Afghanistan.

RESTRUCTURED INPATIENT UNITS ACTIVATE AUG. 1

The restructured inpatient units – 4 Med and 6 Surg/Med – will be activated on Wednesday, Aug. 1. These units are the results of plans and recommendations developed by the hospital teams that addressed restructuring the fourth floor inpatient unit.

ENJOY YOUR FREEDOM? THANK A VETERAN!